

# Ethnologue: Languages of Honduras

## Twenty-sixth edition data

David M. Eberhard, Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig, Editors

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## List of Abbreviations

A	Agent in constituent word order
<i>alt.</i>	alternate name for
<i>alt. dial.</i>	alternate dialect name for
AOV	Agent-Object-Verb
C	Consonant in canonical syllable patterns
CDE	Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)
<i>Class</i>	Language classification
CPPDCE	Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)
CSICH	Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)
DBS	Deaf Bible Society
<i>dial.</i>	primary dialect name for
DOOR	Deaf Opportunity Outreach
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
ILOCITP	ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal People no. 169 (1989)
km	kilometer(s)
L1 / L2	first language / second (or other additional) language
<i>Lg Dev</i>	Language development
<i>Lg Use</i>	Language use
m	meter(s)
P	Patient in constituent word order
PARADISEC	Pacific And Regional Archive for Digital Sources In Endangered Cultures
<i>pej.</i>	pejorative
pl.	plural
S	Subject in constituent word order
sg.	singular
SIL	SIL International
SOV	Subject-Object-Verb
<i>Type</i>	Typological information
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
V	Vowel in canonical syllable patterns
VSO	Verb-Subject-Object
WFD	World Federation of the Deaf

## How to Use This Digest

This *Ethnologue* country digest provides an extract of the information about the language situation in Honduras that is published in the 26th edition of *Ethnologue: Languages of the World* (see <http://www.ethnologue.com>), including some ways of presenting the information that are not available in the online version. The digest begins with a “Country Overview” (page 6) and “Statistical Summaries” (page 8) of languages and number of speakers by language size, by language status, and by language family.

The “Alphabetical Listing of Languages” (page 11) provides detailed information on the 12 languages listed in the *Ethnologue* for the country of Honduras. This includes languages that are indigenous to the country, languages that have developed well-established multigenerational speaker communities after immigrating in the past, and languages that have a significant presence in the country but are not established (that is, not being transmitted to the next generation within the country). A complete language entry has the following form and content:

**Primary language name** [ISO 639-3 code] (Alternate names). Autonym. *Users*: Country user population. Population stability comment. Population remarks. Monolingual population. Ethnic population. *Location*: Location. *Status*: EGIDS level. Special cases. Language function in country. *Class*: Linguistic classification. Macrolanguage membership. *Dialects*: Dialect names. Intelligibility and dialect relations. Lexical similarity. *Type*: Linguistic typology information. *Lg Use*: Remarks on use of the language. Domains of use. User age range. Language attitudes. Bilingualism remarks. Use as second language. *Lg Dev*: Literacy rates. Literacy remarks. Use in education. Publications and use in media. Revitalization efforts. Language development agencies. *DLS*: Digital support. *Writing*: Scripts used. *Other*: Non-indigenous. General remarks. Religion. *Worldwide*: Total population in all countries. Other countries where used.

See <http://www.ethnologue.com/methodology/#languagePages> for a full description of these information elements. If the autonym contains the “?” character, this indicates a complex non-Roman character that the PDF-creating software we are using is not able to render. We regret the inconvenience.

Many ways of finding languages are provided. “Languages by Population” (page 16) lists the languages in order of their first-language speaker populations. “Languages by Status” (page 18) lists the languages by their level of development or endangerment as measured on EGIDS, the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (Lewis and Simons 2010). “Languages by Department” (page 20) lists the top-level administrative subdivisions of Honduras and the languages located within each. “Languages by Family” (page 21) lists the languages by their linguistic classifications. “Language Code Index” (page 22) gives an alphabetical listing of all the three-letter codes from ISO 639-3 that are used in this digest to uniquely identify languages. “Language Name Index” (page 23) lists every name that appears in the language listings as a primary or alternate name of a language or dialect. A total of 39 unique names are associated with

the 12 languages described in this digest.

Finally, a listing of all the published sources cited within this digest is found in “Bibliography” (page 25). The published sources are cited using standard in-text citations enclosed in parentheses, consisting of the author’s or editor’s surname followed by the year of publication. Unpublished sources including personal communications and unpublished reports are also acknowledged when specific statements or facts are attributed to them. They are identified using in-text citations enclosed in parentheses in which the year of the communication is given first, followed by the source’s first initial and surname. In such a case, there is no corresponding entry in the bibliography.

This digest is designed for use in both digital and print formats. The cross-references are thus rendered as page numbers that are hyperlinks. When using the document in printed form, simply turn to the referenced page by number. When using it in digital form, click on the blue text to jump to the cross-referenced location.

If you believe any of the information about a language in this digest is in error or if you are able to supply missing information, please send your proposed change to the editor using one of the means given below. Provide as much information as possible about the source of your information. Full bibliographic details of published sources are especially helpful.

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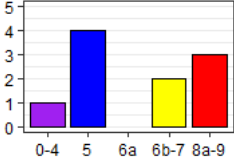
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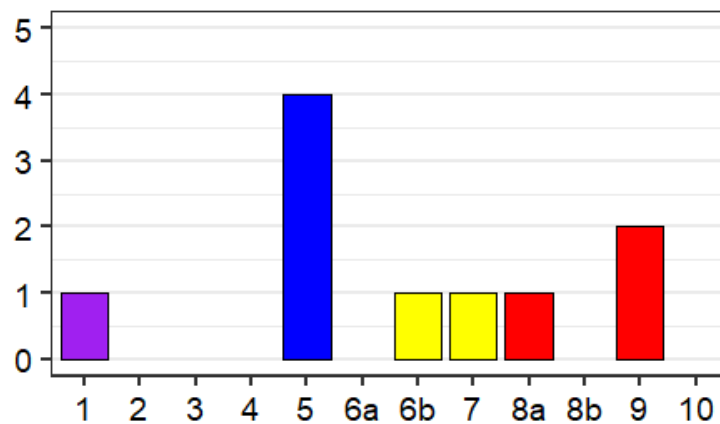
## Country Overview

Name of country	Honduras												
Population	9,546,000 (2021 census)												
Principal language	Spanish												
Literacy rate	87% (2018 UNESCO)												
Deaf population	18,000–70,000												
International conventions	CDE (2013), CPPDCE (2010), CSICH (2006), ICCPR (1997), ILOCITP (1995), UNCRPD (2008), UNDRIP (2007)												
General references	Campbell 1997, Campbell and Oltrogge 1980, Oltrogge 1977, Rivas 1993												
Language counts	<p>The number of established languages listed for Honduras is 10. All are living languages. Of these, 8 are indigenous and 2 are non-indigenous. Furthermore, 1 is institutional, 4 are developing, 2 are in trouble, and 3 are dying. Also listed are 2 unestablished languages.</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Language Vitality Counts for Honduras</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Vitality Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-4</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6a</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6b-7</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8a-9</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Vitality Category	Count	0-4	1	5	4	6a	2	6b-7	3	8a-9	3
Vitality Category	Count												
0-4	1												
5	4												
6a	2												
6b-7	3												
8a-9	3												

See the next page for an explanation of the summary categories for language vitality used in the above counts and graph.

## Language Status Profile

The following histogram gives a graphic profile of the established languages in Honduras with respect to their status of language development versus language endangerment. This includes all of the languages appearing in the “Alphabetical Listing of Languages” (page 11) that report an EGIDS level after *Status*; macrolanguages and unestablished languages are not included in the profile. The horizontal axis plots the estimated level of development or endangerment as measured on the EGIDS scale (Lewis and Simons 2010). The height of each bar indicates the number of languages that are estimated to be at the given level. Consult “Languages by Status” (page 18) in order to see the specific languages for each level.



The color coding of the bars in the histogram above matches the color scheme used in the summary profile graph on the preceding page. In this scheme, the EGIDS levels are grouped as follows:

- Purple = Institutional (EGIDS 0–4) — The language has been developed to the point that it is used and sustained by institutions beyond the home and community.
- Blue = Developing (EGIDS 5) — The language is in vigorous use, with literature in a standardized form being used by some though this is not yet widespread or sustainable.
- Green = Vigorous (EGIDS 6a) — The language is in vigorous use among all generations and remains unstandardized.
- Yellow = In trouble (EGIDS 6b–7) — Intergenerational transmission is in the process of being broken, but the child-bearing generation can still use the language so it is possible that revitalization efforts could restore transmission of the language in the home.
- Red = Dying (EGIDS 8a–9) — The only fluent users (if any) are older than child-bearing age, so it is too late to restore natural intergenerational transmission through the home; a mechanism outside the home would need to be developed.
- Black = Extinct (EGIDS 10) — The language is no longer used and no one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language.

## Statistical Summaries

The “Alphabetical Listing of Languages” (page 11) provides a detailed listing of all the languages of Honduras. This section steps back from the detail to offer a summary view of the language situation in the country. Specifically, it offers three numerical tabulations of the living established languages of Honduras and their users: by language size, by language status, and by language family.

### Summary by language size

Table 1 summarizes the distribution of living established languages in Honduras by number of L1 speakers. The *Population range* column categorizes the sizes of the languages by order of magnitude (in terms of the number of digits in the population of first-language speakers). Consult “Languages by Population” (page 16) for a listing of the specific languages in each range category.

The *Count* column gives the number of living established languages within the specified population range. The *Percent* column gives the share of the count for that population range as a percentage of the total number of languages given at the bottom of the Count column. The *Cumulative* column gives the cumulative sum of the percentage of languages going from top to bottom in the column.

The *Total* column gives the total L1 population of all the languages in the given range category. The second *Percent* column gives the percentage of the total country population as estimated at the bottom of the Total column. Note that if the table has a row for Unknown, representing languages for which the *Ethnologue* does not have a population estimate, the calculation of population percentage is not able to take those languages into account. The final *Cumulative* column gives the cumulative sums of the population percentages going from top to bottom in the column.

**Table 1:** Distribution of languages by number of first-language speakers

Population range	Living languages			Number of speakers		
	Count	Percent	Cumulative	Total	Percent	Cumulative
1,000,000 to 9,999,999	1	10.0	10.0%	9,330,000	98.70509	98.70509%
10,000 to 99,999	3	30.0	40.0%	112,100	1.18594	99.89103%
1,000 to 9,999	1	10.0	50.0%	9,000	0.09521	99.98625%
100 to 999	3	30.0	80.0%	1,300	0.01375	100.00000%
0	2	20.0	100.0%		0.00000	100.00000%
<i>Totals</i>	10	100.0		9,452,400	100.00000	



## Summary by language status

Table 2 summarizes the distribution of living established languages in Honduras by their status in terms of language development or language endangerment. The *EGIDS* column categorizes the languages by their level on the EGIDS scale. Consult “Languages by Status” (page 18) for a listing of the specific languages that have been assigned to each level. Note that the EGIDS level reported here is for the status of the language in Honduras. Languages that are also used in other countries may be assigned to a different EGIDS level in those countries.

The next six columns are as in Table 1. In addition, the *Mean* column gives the average L1 population of all the languages with the given EGIDS level and the *Median* column gives the median L1 population for the languages at that level, that is, half of the languages at that level have a higher population and half have a lower population. If there are any languages with an unknown population, these are ignored in the calculation of the mean and the median.

**Table 2:** Distribution of languages by vitality status

EGIDS	Living languages			Number of speakers			Mean	Median
	Count	Percent	Cumulative	Total	Percent	Cumulative		
1	1	10.0	10.0%	9,330,000	98.7051	98.7051%	9,330,000	9,330,000
5	4	40.0	50.0%	78,700	0.8326	99.5377%	19,675	19,000
6b	1	10.0	60.0%	43,100	0.4560	99.9937%	43,100	43,100
7	1	10.0	70.0%	300	0.0032	99.9968%	300	300
8a	1	10.0	80.0%	300	0.0032	100.0000%	300	300
9	2	20.0	100.0%		0.0000	100.0000%		
<i>Totals</i>	10	100.0		9,452,400	100.0000			

## Summary by language family

The genealogical classifications given in the language entries of the “Alphabetical Listing of Languages” (page 11) name 8 different top-level groups. Table 3 summarizes the distribution of living established languages and their L1 populations within these families. The columns are as for table 2, with the exception that *Cumulative* is excluded since there is no inherent ordering of the families.

**Table 3:** Distribution of languages by language family

Language family	Living languages		Number of speakers			
	Count	Percent	Total	Percent	Mean	Median
Chibchan	1	10.0	300	0.0	300	300

Language family	Living languages		Number of speakers			
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>
Indo-European	2	20.0	9,339,000	98.8	4,669,500	4,669,500
Jicaquean	1	10.0	300	0.0	300	300
Lencan	1	10.0		0.0		
Maipurean	1	10.0	43,100	0.5	43,100	43,100
Mayan	1	10.0		0.0		
Misumalpan	2	20.0	29,700	0.3	14,850	14,850
Sign language	1	10.0	40,000	0.4	40,000	40,000
<i>Totals</i>	10	100.0	9,452,400	100.0		

## Alphabetical Listing of Languages

**Armenian, Western** [hyw]. *Users*: 1,300 in Honduras (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Armenian. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. *Writing*: Armenian script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,582,290 (as L1: 1,576,490; as L2: 5,800). Global EGIDS level: 5 (Developing). Indigenous in: Armenia, Georgia, Turkey. Also established in 21 other countries and unestablished in 13 more.

**Chinese, Yue** [yue]. *Users*: 1,000 in Honduras (1999). *Location*: Tegucigalpa. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Sino-Tibetan, Chinese. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; genitives, relatives, adjectives, numerals before noun heads; noun classifiers; no articles; 18 consonants, 7 vowels; tonal (6 tones: 3 level, 3 contour). *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1894–1981. *Writing*: Braille script, used in Hong Kong. Han script, Simplified variant. Han script, Traditional variant, official usage in Hong Kong and Macau, also used elsewhere. Latin script, used since mid-19th century. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 86,633,370 (as L1: 86,116,370; as L2: 517,000). Global EGIDS level: 2 (Provincial). Indigenous in: China, China–Hong Kong, China–Macao. Also established in 12 other countries and unestablished in 18 more.

**Ch’orti’** [caa]. *Users*: No known L1 speakers in Honduras. Ethnic population: 33,300 (2013 census). *Location*: Copán department: along Guatemala border. *Status*: 9 (Dormant). *Class*: Mayan, Yucatecan-Core Mayan, Core Mayan, Cholan-Tzeltalan, Cholan, Chorti-Cholti. *Type*: VOS. *Lg Use*: Shifted to Spanish [spa]. *Lg Dev*: Grammar. Texts. NT: 1997–2012. *Writing*: Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 16,700. Global EGIDS level: 6b (Threatened). Also indigenous in: Guatemala.

**English** [eng] (Inglés). Autonym: English. *Users*: 9,000 in Honduras (2015 J. Leclerc). Also 13,000 speakers of Bay Island Creole English (2015 J. Leclerc). *Location*: Islas de la Bahía department: large cities along north mainland coast. *Status*: 5\* (Dispersed). *Class*: Indo-European, Germanic, West, English. *Dialect*: Bay Islands English. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; genitives after noun heads; articles, adjectives, numerals before noun heads; question word initial; word order distinguishes subject, object, indirect objects, given and new information, topic and comment; active and passive; causative; comparative; consonant and vowel clusters; 24 consonants, 13 vowels, 8 diphthongs; non-tonal; free stress; phrasal verbs. *Lg Use*: Used as L2 by Garifuna [cab]. *Lg Dev*: Taught as subject in secondary schools. Fully developed. Bible: 1382–2002. *Writing*: Braille script. Deseret Alphabet, developed in 1854 with limited usage until 1877. Duployan shorthand. Latin script, primary usage. Shavian (Shaw) script, no longer in use. *Other*: Non-indigenous. Some creole influence. *Map*: 15. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,456,448,320 (as L1: 379,682,200; as L2: 1076,766,120). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: Ireland, United Kingdom. Also established in 167 other countries and unestablished in 16 more.

**Garifuna** [cab] (Black Carib, Caribe, Central American Carib, Garínagu, Karif). Autonym:

Garífuna. *Users*: 43,100 in Honduras (2013 census), based on ethnicity. 100 monolinguals. Ethnic population: 100,000 (2021 J. Leclerc). *Location*: Atlántida and Colón departments; Cortes department: north coast between Masca and Plaplaya in Gracias a Dios department; Islas de la Bahía (Roatan island) department; cities: La Ceiba, Puerto Cortés, San Pedro Sula, and Tegucigalpa; 37 villages. *Status*: 6b (Threatened). *Class*: Maipurean, Northern, Maritime, Ta-Maipurean, Iñeri. *Dialects*: Western Garífuna, Eastern Garífuna. Related to Island Carib [crb], with borrowings from Carib [car], Spanish [spa], English [eng], and French [fra]. Eastern Garífuna dialect is spoken in Honduras (leaves out, r, and tends to shorten words), Western Garífuna in Guatemala and Belize. *Type*: VSO. *Lg Use*: All domains. Some of all ages. Positive attitudes. A few also use English [eng]. Also use Spanish [spa], with some shifting in some villages. *Lg Dev*: Literacy rate in L1: 1%–5%. Literacy rate in L2: 5%–15%. Radio. Dictionary. Grammar. Texts. Bible: 2002. *DLS*: Emerging (0.11). *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Ancestors taken from Saint Vincent Island in 1796–1797, and taken to Roatan Island. Most went to Trujillo, Honduras in 1937. About 35 years later political troubles threatened their existence, and they fled further east into Honduras and Belize. Later they emigrated to other countries. Christian, traditional religion. *Map*: 15. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 119,400. Also indigenous in: Belize, Guatemala. Also established in: Nicaragua. Unestablished in: United States.

**Honduran Sign Language** [hds] (Honduras Sign Language, LESHO, Lengua de Señas Hondureñas, Lengua de señas Hondureña). *Users*: 40,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/SIL). Estimated 30,000–60,000 deaf signers, assuming 0.3%–0.6% of the total population. Other estimates: 34,800 (2008 WFD), 18,000–70,000 (Williams 2010:5). *Location*: Scattered. *Status*: 5 (Developing). Recognized language (2013, Decreto no. 321-2013), Recognizes LESHO as a means of communication for deaf and the general population, provides for use in deaf education, training of interpreters and provision of interpreters for official government communications. *Class*: Sign language, Deaf community sign language. *Dialects*: Deaf people along the north coast have some distinct signs from deaf people in the southern part of the country. Intelligibility and standardization across dialects is increasing as more deaf have opportunity to socialize with other parts of the country (Williams 2010:14–15). In addition to LESHO, a distinct sign language (not yet recognized in ISO 639-3) has developed independently on two islands off the north coast and is used by deaf, deaf-blind, and hearing community members. Tentatively called Bay Islands Sign Language (BISL), it is well-adapted for tactile use (2019 B. Braithwaite). Lexical variation in different regions; people disagree over who uses ‘pure’ LESHO vs. who has more influence from ASL [ase] (Williams 2010:13–15). *Type*: One-handed fingerspelling similar to ASL. Reports of an older, two-handed fingerspelling system similar to Guatemalan Sign Language [gsm] (Williams 2010:16). *Lg Use*: Vigorous. Used by all except elderly deaf; in 2010 research it was rare to find any LESHO user who was born before 1970. Older deaf were reported to sign differently but it was not clear what system they used or if there was any consistency. Some children learn LESHO in primary schools, others don’t learn LESHO until their teens (Williams 2010:6, 14, 16). Some also use American Sign Language [ase] (Williams 2010). Some also use Spanish

[spa] (Williams 2010). *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. Agency: Asociación Nacional de Sordos de Honduras (ANSH). *DLS*: Emerging (0.04). *Other*: At least 17 deaf schools (Williams 2010:6), at least 12 of which offer primary education with Honduran Sign Language as their communication philosophy. Six are located in Tegucigalpa. 5–8 certified interpreters (Williams 2010:18).

**Lenca** [len] (Honduran Lenca, Lenka). *Users*: No known L1 speakers. Last fluent speaker probably died by the 1970s (Campbell et al 1978). Some semi-speakers (Adelaar 2007). Ethnic population: 454,000 (2013 census). *Location*: Comayagua, Francisco Morazán, Intibucá, La Paz, Lempira, and Valle departments. *Status*: 9 (Dormant). *Class*: Lencan. *Dialects*: None known. Some considered it Macro-Chibchan. *Lg Use*: Shifted to Spanish [spa]. *DLS*: Still. *Writing*: Unwritten.

**Mayangna** [yan] (Sumu, Tawahka). *Users*: 700 in Honduras (1997 SIL). Ethnic population: 2,690 (2013 census). *Location*: Colón department: southeast corner; Gracias a Dios and Olancho departments: between Patuca and Wanki rivers. *Status*: 5 (Developing). *Class*: Misumalpan. *Dialect*: Twahka. *Type*: SOV. *Lg Use*: Used by all. *Lg Dev*: Literacy rate in L1: 10%–30%. Dictionary. Bible: 1999. *Writing*: Latin script. *Map*: 15. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 8,700. Also indigenous in: Nicaragua.

**Mískito** [miq] (Marquito, Mosquito, Mískitu, Mískito). Autonym: Mískitu. *Users*: 29,000 in Honduras (Rivas 1993). Ethnic population: 80,000 (2013 census). *Location*: Colón department; Gracias a Dios and Olancho departments, south, Coco river watershed; coastal area, and northwest from Puerto Lempira. *Status*: 5 (Developing). *Class*: Misumalpan. *Type*: SOV; articles, relatives after noun heads, word order distinguishes subject and object; verb affixes mark person and number; ergative; passive; CVC; nontonal. *Lg Use*: Used by all. Also use Spanish [spa]. *Lg Dev*: Literacy rate in L1: 1%–10%. Literacy rate in L2: 5%–25%. Dictionary. Grammar. Bible: 1999. *Writing*: Latin script. *Map*: 15. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 143,000. Also indigenous in: Nicaragua.

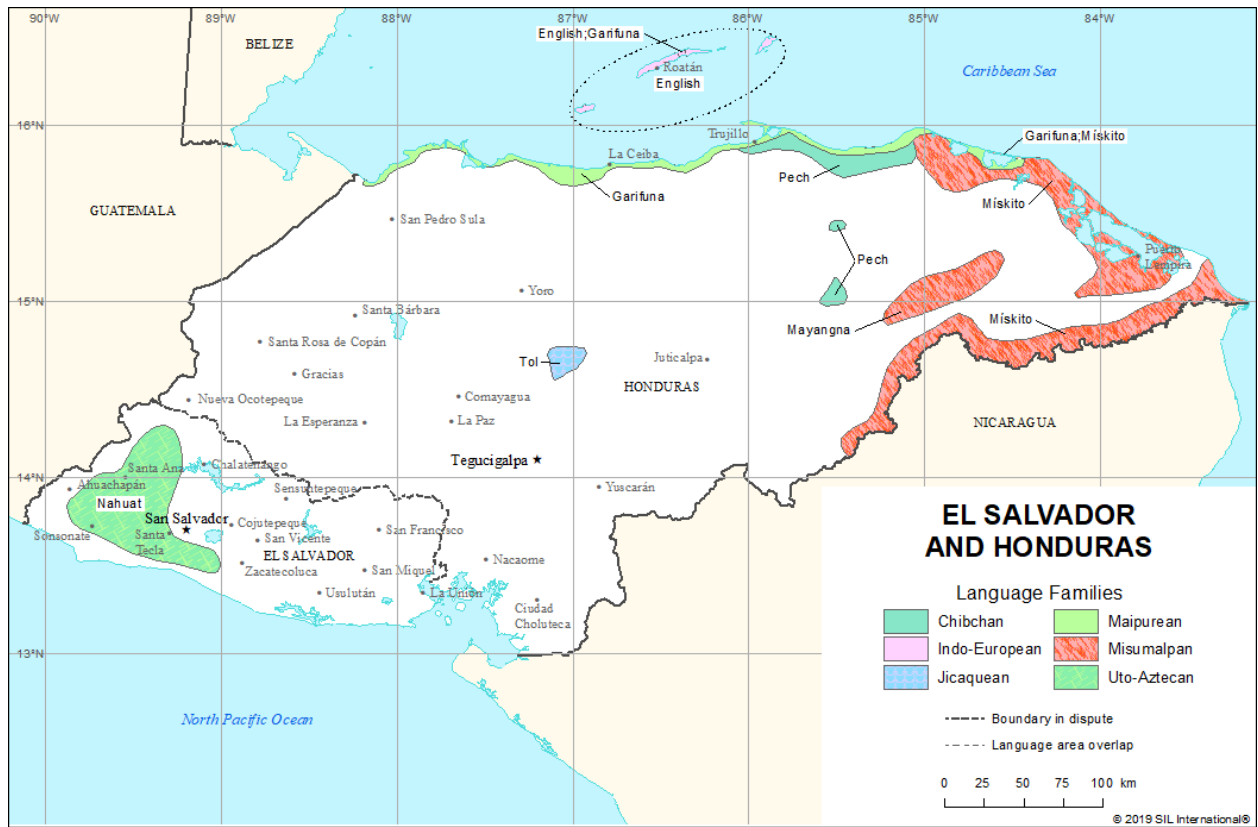
**Pech** [pay] (Paya, Pesh, Seco). *Users*: 300 (Yasugi 2007). Ethnic population: 6,020 (2013 census). *Location*: Colón department: near Caribbean coast; Olancho department: Dulce Nombre de Culmi and Catamacas municipalities. *Status*: 8a (Moribund). *Class*: Chibchan, Chibchan B. *Type*: SOV. *Lg Use*: Use Pech more in Agua Amarilla and La Laguna in El Carbón. Older adults only. Shifted to Spanish [spa]. *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. Grammar. *DLS*: Still. *Writing*: Unwritten. *Other*: Much community interest to preserve the Pech language, and some work is being done to preserve it. *Map*: 15.

**Spanish** [spa] (Castellano, Español). Autonym: Castellano, Español. *Users*: 9,453,000 in Honduras, all users. L1 users: 9,330,000 in Honduras (Instituto Cervantes 2021). L2 users: 123,000 (Instituto Cervantes 2021). *Status*: 1 (National). Statutory national language (1982, Constitution, Article 6). *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Ibero-Romance, West Iberian, Castilian. *Dialect*: Central American Spanish (Castellano centroamericano, Español centroamericano). *Type*: SVO; prepositions; genitives, relatives after noun heads; articles, numerals before noun heads; adjectives before or after

noun heads depending on whether it is evaluative or descriptive; question word initial; gender (masculine/feminine); definite and indefinite articles; verb affixes mark number, person; passives; tense; comparatives; 20 consonants, 5 vowels, 5 diphthongs; non-tonal; stress on penultimate syllable. Silbo Gomero whistled variety of Spanish used in Canary Islands. *Lg Dev*: Taught in all primary and secondary schools. Fully developed. Bible: 1553–2012. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 559,078,890 (as L1: 485,063,960; as L2: 74,014,930). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: Andorra, Gibraltar, Spain. Also established in 39 other countries and unestablished in 33 more.

**Tol** [jic] (Tolpan, Tolupan, Torrupan, “Jicaque” *pej.*, “Xicaque” *pej.*). Autonym: Tol. *Users*: 300 (Yasugi 2007). Ethnic population: 19,000 (2013 census). *Location*: Francisco Morazán department: Montaña de la Flor and Yoro. *Status*: 7 (Shifting). *Class*: Jicaquean. *Dialects*: No distinct dialects. It may be distantly related to Subtiaba [sut] of Nicaragua (no remaining speakers), Malinaltepec Me’phaa [tcf] of Mexico, or the Hokan languages. *Type*: SOV. *Lg Use*: Most shifting to Spanish [[spa](#)]. *Lg Dev*: Literacy rate in L1: 5%–10%. Literacy rate in L2: 5%–15%. Dictionary. Texts. NT: 1993–2010. *DLS*: Emerging (0.01). *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Christian, traditional religion. *Map*: 15.

# Language Map



## Languages by Population

In this section the languages of Honduras are listed in order of their population of first-language speakers within the country, from highest to lowest. The entries report just the population and status elements.

### 1,000,000 to 9,999,999

**Spanish** [[spa](#)] *Users:* 9,330,000 in Honduras (Instituto Cervantes 2021). 9,453,000 in Honduras, all users. L2 users: 123,000 (Instituto Cervantes 2021). *Status:* 1 (National). Statutory national language (1982, Constitution, Article 6). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 559,078,890 (as L1: 485,063,960; as L2: 74,014,930).

### 10,000 to 99,999

**Garifuna** [[cab](#)] *Users:* 43,100 in Honduras (2013 census), based on ethnicity. 100 monolinguals. Ethnic population: 100,000 (2021 J. Leclerc). *Status:* 6b (Threatened). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 119,400.

**Honduran Sign Language** [[hds](#)] *Users:* 40,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/SIL). Estimated 30,000–60,000 deaf signers, assuming 0.3%–0.6% of the total population. Other estimates: 34,800 (2008 WFD), 18,000–70,000 (Williams 2010:5). *Status:* 5 (Developing). Recognized language (2013, Decreto no. 321-2013), Recognizes LESH0 as a means of communication for deaf and the general population, provides for use in deaf education, training of interpreters and provision of interpreters for official government communications.

**Mískito** [[miq](#)] *Users:* 29,000 in Honduras (Rivas 1993). Ethnic population: 80,000 (2013 census). *Status:* 5 (Developing). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 143,000.

### 1,000 to 9,999

**English** [[eng](#)] *Users:* 9,000 in Honduras (2015 J. Leclerc). Also 13,000 speakers of Bay Island Creole English (2015 J. Leclerc). *Status:* 5\* (Dispersed). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 1,456,448,320 (as L1: 379,682,200; as L2: 1076,766,120).

**Armenian, Western** [[hyw](#)] *Users:* 1,300 in Honduras (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 1,582,290 (as L1: 1,576,490; as L2: 5,800).

**Chinese, Yue** [[yue](#)] *Users:* 1,000 in Honduras (1999). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 86,633,370 (as L1: 86,116,370; as L2: 517,000).



## 100 to 999

**Mayangna** [[yan](#)] *Users:* 700 in Honduras (1997 SIL). Ethnic population: 2,690 (2013 census). *Status:* 5 (Developing). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 8,700.

**Pech** [[pay](#)] *Users:* 300 (Yasugi 2007). Ethnic population: 6,020 (2013 census). *Status:* 8a (Moribund).

**Tol** [[jic](#)] *Users:* 300 (Yasugi 2007). Ethnic population: 19,000 (2013 census). *Status:* 7 (Shifting).

## 0

**Ch'orti'** [[caa](#)] *Users:* No known L1 speakers in Honduras. Ethnic population: 33,300 (2013 census). *Status:* 9 (Dormant). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 16,700.

**Lenca** [[len](#)] *Users:* No known L1 speakers. Last fluent speaker probably died by the 1970s (Campbell et al 1978). Some semi-speakers (Adelaar 2007). Ethnic population: 454,000 (2013 census). *Status:* 9 (Dormant).

## Languages by Status

In this section the languages of Honduras are listed in order of their status within the country as represented by their level on the EGIDs scale (Lewis and Simons 2010). The language entries are reduced to just the information elements that are relevant to assessing the EGIDS level: population, status, language use, language development, and writing.

### 1 (National)

**Spanish** [[spa](#)] *Users*: 9,453,000 in Honduras, all users. L1 users: 9,330,000 in Honduras (Instituto Cervantes 2021). L2 users: 123,000 (Instituto Cervantes 2021). *Status*: Statutory national language (1982, Constitution, Article 6). *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 559,078,890 (as L1: 485,063,960; as L2: 74,014,930).

### 5 (Developing)

**Honduran Sign Language** [[hds](#)] *Users*: 40,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/SIL). Estimated 30,000–60,000 deaf signers, assuming 0.3%–0.6% of the total population. Other estimates: 34,800 (2008 WFD), 18,000–70,000 (Williams 2010:5). *Status*: Recognized language (2013, Decreto no. 321-2013), Recognizes LESHO as a means of communication for deaf and the general population, provides for use in deaf education, training of interpreters and provision of interpreters for official government communications. *Lg Use*: Vigorous. Used by all except elderly deaf; in 2010 research it was rare to find any LESHO user who was born before 1970. Older deaf were reported to sign differently but it was not clear what system they used or if there was any consistency. Some children learn LESHO in primary schools, others don't learn LESHO until their teens (Williams 2010:6, 14, 16). Some also use American Sign Language [[ase](#)] (Williams 2010). Some also use Spanish [[spa](#)] (Williams 2010). *Lg Dev*: Dictionary.

**Mayangna** [[yan](#)] *Users*: 700 in Honduras (1997 SIL). Ethnic population: 2,690 (2013 census). *Lg Use*: Used by all. *Writing*: Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 8,700.

**Mískito** [[miq](#)] *Users*: 29,000 in Honduras (Rivas 1993). Ethnic population: 80,000 (2013 census). *Lg Use*: Used by all. Also use Spanish [[spa](#)]. *Writing*: Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 143,000.

### 5 (Dispersed)

**English** [[eng](#)] *Users*: 9,000 in Honduras (2015 J. Leclerc). Also 13,000 speakers of Bay Island Creole English (2015 J. Leclerc). *Lg Use*: Used as L2 by Garifuna [[cab](#)]. *Writing*: Braille script. Deseret Alphabet, developed in 1854 with limited usage until 1877. Duployan shorthand. Latin script, primary usage. Shavian (Shaw) script, no longer in use. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,456,448,320 (as L1: 379,682,200; as L2: 1076,766,120).

## 6b (Threatened)

**Garifuna** [cab] *Users:* 43,100 in Honduras (2013 census), based on ethnicity. 100 monolinguals. Ethnic population: 100,000 (2021 J. Leclerc). *Lg Use:* All domains. Some of all ages. Positive attitudes. A few also use English [eng]. Also use Spanish [spa], with some shifting in some villages. *Lg Dev:* Radio. Dictionary. Grammar. Texts. Bible: 2002. *Writing:* Latin script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 119,400.

## 7 (Shifting)

**Tol** [jic] *Users:* 300 (Yasugi 2007). Ethnic population: 19,000 (2013 census). *Lg Use:* Most shifting to Spanish [spa]. *Lg Dev:* Dictionary. Texts. NT: 1993–2010. *Writing:* Latin script.

## 8a (Moribund)

**Pech** [pay] *Users:* 300 (Yasugi 2007). Ethnic population: 6,020 (2013 census). *Lg Use:* Use Pech more in Agua Amarilla and La Laguna in El Carbón. Older adults only. Shifted to Spanish [spa]. *Lg Dev:* Dictionary. Grammar. *Writing:* Unwritten.

## 9 (Dormant)

**Ch'orti'** [caa] *Users:* No known L1 speakers in Honduras. Ethnic population: 33,300 (2013 census). *Lg Use:* Shifted to Spanish [spa]. *Writing:* Latin script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 16,700.

**Lenca** [len] *Users:* No known L1 speakers. Last fluent speaker probably died by the 1970s (Campbell et al 1978). Some semi-speakers (Adelaar 2007). Ethnic population: 454,000 (2013 census). *Lg Use:* Shifted to Spanish [spa]. *Writing:* Unwritten.

## Unestablished

**Armenian, Western** [hyw] *Users:* 1,300 in Honduras (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Writing:* Armenian script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 1,582,290 (as L1: 1,576,490; as L2: 5,800).

**Chinese, Yue** [yue] *Users:* 1,000 in Honduras (1999). *Writing:* Braille script, used in Hong Kong. Han script, Simplified variant. Han script, Traditional variant, official usage in Hong Kong and Macau, also used elsewhere. Latin script, used since mid-19th century. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 86,633,370 (as L1: 86,116,370; as L2: 517,000).

## Languages by Department

This index gives an alphabetical listing of the top-level administrative subdivisions within Honduras. Under the name of each department is a list of the language communities that are located within its area.

### **Atlántida**

Garifuna [cab], 11

### **Colón**

Garifuna [cab], 11

Mayangna [yan], 13

Mískito [miq], 13

Pech [pay], 13

### **Comayagua**

Lenca [len], 13

### **Copán**

Ch'orti' [caa], 11

### **Cortés**

Garifuna [cab], 11

### **Francisco Morazán**

Lenca [len], 13

Tol [jic], 14

### **Gracias a Dios**

Garifuna [cab], 11

Mayangna [yan], 13

Mískito [miq], 13

### **Intibucá**

Lenca [len], 13

### **Islas de la Bahía**

English [eng], 11

Garifuna [cab], 11

### **La Paz**

Lenca [len], 13

### **Lempira**

Lenca [len], 13

### **Olancho**

Mayangna [yan], 13

Mískito [miq], 13

Pech [pay], 13

### **Valle**

Lenca [len], 13

## Languages by Family

This index gives an alphabetical listing of the linguistic classifications used for the established languages of Honduras. The entries in this index represent the full path in the linguistic family tree from the highest level grouping down to the lowest. All the languages listed in the same entry are members of the same lowest-level subgroup. The referenced page contains the main entry that describes the language.

### **Chibchan, Chibchan B**

Pech [pay], [13](#)

### **Indo-European, Germanic, West, English**

English [eng], [11](#)

### **Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Ibero-Romance, West Iberian, Castilian**

Spanish [spa], [13](#)

### **Jicaquean**

Tol [jic], [14](#)

### **Lencan**

Lenca [len], [13](#)

### **Maipurean, Northern, Maritime, Ta-Maipurean, Iñeri**

Garifuna [cab], [11](#)

### **Mayan, Yucatecan-Core Mayan, Core Mayan, Cholan-Tzeltalan, Cholan, Chorti-Cholti**

Ch'orti' [caa], [11](#)

### **Misumalpan**

Mayangna [yan], [13](#)

Mískito [miq], [13](#)

### **Sign language, Deaf community sign language**

Honduran Sign Language [hds], [12](#)

## Language Code Index

This index gives an alphabetical listing of all 12 three-letter codes that are used in this work to uniquely identify languages. The referenced page contains the main entry that describes the language. All codes listed are part of the ISO 639-3 standard; see <http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/>.

<b>caa</b>	Ch'orti', <a href="#">11</a>	<b>len</b>	Lenca, <a href="#">13</a>
<b>cab</b>	Garifuna, <a href="#">11</a>	<b>miq</b>	Mískito, <a href="#">13</a>
<b>eng</b>	English, <a href="#">11</a>	<b>pay</b>	Pech, <a href="#">13</a>
<b>hds</b>	Honduran Sign Language, <a href="#">12</a>	<b>spa</b>	Spanish, <a href="#">13</a>
<b>hyw</b>	Armenian, Western, <a href="#">11</a>	<b>yan</b>	Mayangna, <a href="#">13</a>
<b>jic</b>	Tol, <a href="#">14</a>	<b>yue</b>	Chinese, Yue, <a href="#">11</a>

## Language Name Index

This index lists every name that appears in the language listings as a primary or alternate name of a language or dialect. The following abbreviations are used in the index entries: *alt.* ‘alternate name for’; *alt. dial.* ‘alternate name for a dialect of’; *dial.* ‘primary name for a dialect of’; *pej. alt.* ‘pejorative alternate name for’; and *pej. alt. dial.* ‘pejorative alternate name for a dialect of’. Each index entry resolves to the primary name for the language with which the indexed name is associated, followed by square brackets containing the unique three-letter language code from ISO 639-3. The referenced page contains the main entry that describes the language. If the language appears on a map, the entry for the primary name also lists page numbers for the maps on which the language occurs.

- Western Armenian**, *see* Armenian, Western [hyw], 11
- Bay Islands English**, *dial.* English [eng], 11
- Black Carib**, *alt.* Garifuna [cab], 11
- Caribe**, *alt.* Garifuna [cab], 11
- Castellano**, *alt.* Spanish [spa], 13
- Castellano centroamericano**, *alt. dial.* Spanish [spa], 13
- Central American Carib**, *alt.* Garifuna [cab], 11
- Central American Spanish**, *dial.* Spanish [spa], 13
- Yue Chinese**, *see* Chinese, Yue [yue], 11
- Ch’orti’** [caa], 11
- Eastern Garifuna**, *dial.* Garifuna [cab], 11
- English** [eng], 11, 15
- Español**, *alt.* Spanish [spa], 13
- Español centroamericano**, *alt. dial.* Spanish [spa], 13
- Garifuna** [cab], 11, 15
- Garífuna**, *alt.* Garifuna [cab], 11
- Garínagu**, *alt.* Garifuna [cab], 11
- Honduran Lenca**, *alt.* Lenca [len], 13
- Honduran Sign Language** [hds], 12, 0
- Honduras Sign Language**, *alt.* Honduran Sign Language [hds], 12
- Inglés**, *alt.* English [eng], 11
- Jicaque**, *pej. alt.* Tol [jic], 14
- Karif**, *alt.* Garifuna [cab], 11
- Lenca** [len], 13
- Lengua de señas Hondureña**, *alt.* Honduran Sign Language [hds], 12
- Lengua de Señas Hondureñas**, *alt.* Honduran Sign Language [hds], 12
- Lenka**, *alt.* Lenca [len], 13
- LESHO**, *alt.* Honduran Sign Language [hds], 12
- Marquito**, *alt.* Mískito [miq], 13
- Mayangna** [yan], 13, 15
- Mískito** [miq], 13, 15
- Mískitu**, *alt.* Mískito [miq], 13
- Mísquito**, *alt.* Mískito [miq], 13
- Mosquito**, *alt.* Mískito [miq], 13
- Paya**, *alt.* Pech [pay], 13
- Pech** [pay], 13, 15
- Pesh**, *alt.* Pech [pay], 13
- Seco**, *alt.* Pech [pay], 13
- Spanish** [spa], 13
- Sumu**, *alt.* Mayangna [yan], 13
- Tawahka**, *alt.* Mayangna [yan], 13
- Tol** [jic], 14, 15
- Tolpan**, *alt.* Tol [jic], 14
- Tolupan**, *alt.* Tol [jic], 14

**Torupan**, *alt.* Tol [jic], [14](#)

**Twahka**, *dial.* Mayangna [yan], [13](#)

**Western Garifuna**, *dial.* Garifuna [cab], [11](#)

**Xicaque**, *pej. alt.* Tol [jic], [14](#)



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